

# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

For Release 8:30 a.m. CST, January 15, 1980

### UPDATED ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL PROGRAM WILL PROTECT RANCHERS AS NEW METHODS ARE DEVELOPED, SECRETARY ANDRUS TELLS CONFERENCE

Interior Secretary Cecil D. Andrus said today that most current methods of animal damage control will continue to be used on public lands where livestock losses to predators is substantial.

Addressing a conference on animal damage control in Austin, Texas, Andrus emphasized that main thrusts of the new Federal policy announced last November would be the focusing of predator control actions on problem areas and the development of new and environmentally acceptable methods of animal damage control.

"The revised Federal policy on predator control is an attempt not only to update our program but to recognize the realities of the 1980s," Andrus said.

"One of these realities is that Compound 1080 is so controversial and arouses such high emotions that it will never be accepted by a majority of society in any form," the Secretary said. "The new policy ends research on 1080, redirecting our efforts to find another substance that would be lethal without the secondary poisoning effects of 1080.

"The new policy eliminates in our Federal program the controversial practice of denning -- the killing of coyote pups in the den. This is another facing up to reality, the reality that the vast majority of Americans finds such a practice abhorrent and inhumane."

The Secretary explained that there will be no immediate changes in the use of other current animal damage control techniques.

"We will use animal damage control specialists, traps, M-44 devices, aerial hunting and other methods that have proven to be effective in reducing the offending animals where substantial losses of livestock have been sustained, but we are not going to spend our meager resources where there is no serious jeopardy to livestock," Andrus said.

Andrus said that in formulating the new policy he had rejected the ideas on one extreme that livestock should not be permitted to graze on public lands where there is a substantial predator population and from the other extreme which seeks the annihilation of coyotes and other such predators.

Noting that losses to predators vary greatly by location, Andrus said, "It only makes sense to me to concentrate our efforts to solve the problem where the greatest losses are occurring."

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Andrus said that the long term goal of the policy would be to develop new and more effective means of predator control which are environmentally sound. He said that an accelerated and redirected research program would be an important part of the policy, and that other steps would include development of improved husbandry techniques and expanded availability of extension services to ranchers.

The Secretary reassured cattlemen and sheepmen that the new policy would not be detrimental to them.

"I will see to it that our procedures allow for stepped up predator control action when an obvious problem is developing for a rancher," Andrus said.

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